

EPA

Moderator: Lisa Garcia
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3:00 p.m. CT

Operator: Good afternoon. My name is (Julieanne) and I will be your conference operator today. At this time I would like to welcome everyone to the EPA EJ Community Outreach Call. All lines have been placed on mute to prevent any background noise.

After the speakers' remarks there will be a question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question during this time, simply press star, then the number one on your telephone key pad. If you would like to withdraw your question, press the pound key. Thank you. I would now like to turn the conference over to Ms. Lisa Garcia. Please go ahead, ma'am.

Lisa Garcia: Good afternoon, everyone. This is Lisa Garcia. Welcome to the, I guess the third or second Environmental Justice community outreach call. We will try to continue to have these calls quarterly. And so I hope everyone has an agenda. So I'm going to try to quickly go through some of our agenda items so we can get to the Q&A and allow for folks on the phone to ask questions.

So the first item on the agenda is to update you folks and update on Plan EJ 2014. And as you may know Plan EJ 2014 was put out for public comment in July of this year. And the public comment period closed I guess officially on October 22 but if folks have any other thoughts or concerns please feel free to submit it while we continue to work on the plan.

The plan envisions working on five main topic areas and then four tool areas and each program manager which would be air, water, solid waste, the office of enforcement and compliance to come up with some programmatic

initiatives. But the plan envisions that we're going to try to accomplish many of the items on it hopefully within the next few years but certainly by the 20th anniversary of the executive order on Environmental Justice and that is February of 2014.

The next steps are reviewing the comments. We're beginning to review the comments that were received and we are going ahead with some of the implementation and trying to figure out what the work plans will be for each one of the items described. And one of the items described in Plan EJ 2014 is the permitting piece.

And we'll be meeting with the NEJAC which is November 15 through the 18th to discuss the permitting charge with the NEJAC which will help to inform EPA as it looks at the permitting charge. And I'm sorry the permitting piece of Plan EJ 2014.

And then just so folks know on the EJ and rulemaking we are moving forward with that and even though it envisions you know moving forward that some of the rules that are going forward are already are beginning to look at incorporating an EJ analysis or demographic analysis.

And so I'll take questions on that towards the end if there are any. A quick update on the reinvigorated Environmental Justice interagency work group: There was a kick off cabinet meeting on September 22 and hopefully many of you received the press releases on that and some of the articles on that.

But it was an exciting day for many of us to once again have the administration as a whole talking about Environmental Justice and trying to figure out ways that we can all work together to really advance the work and come up with new updated strategies move into the 21st century and work with communities and EJ leaders and advocates across the country on really how we move forward from where we've been.

And one of the first things that's happening under the interagency work group is on December 15 we'll be hosting a White House forum. Some of you have received some calls on that. We're hoping to get out an invitation to some of

the EJ advocates and leaders soon. And that is by invitation. So hopefully many of you will be receiving that invitation over the next week or so.

The third item on the agenda is EPA's staff changes. Many of you received e-mails from a few of us saying that it's just an internal staff change but basically in an effort to really capture the administrative priority and to make sure that we integrate EJ into the many programs at EPA we have created a new position. It's an associate administrative assistant.

And I'm sorry, an associate assistant administrator position in OECA and I was appointed as that person. So I'm very excited to take on that role. And my deputy and this is good news for everybody, Charles Lee who obviously has been a leader on Environmental Justice issues for many years has been at EPA really keeping the movement and the energy on Environmental Justice going here at EPA.

He will be moving to the front office of OECA and will be my deputy and this will allow him to also join in the efforts of working on cross cutting cross agency work being able to work on interagency work really working on the sustainable partnerships and also to help implement Plan EJ 2014 which one again is a cross agency plan.

And we really need that effort to kind of come out of OEJ, the Office of Environmental Justice and be in a senior management level at EPA to be able to work on that and really get to the implementation and finalize the work on that. So Charles was unable to join us today but he is excited about the new position.

And Heather Case who was the deputy in OEJ will be taking the role of acting director. And then – I'm sorry folks, I have a little bit of a cold so I'm trying to work through this quickly. The fourth item on the agenda is the Gulf Coast restoration. Many of you know that Lisa Jackson the administrator of the EPA was named by the president as the chair of the task force on restoration.

And the executive order that president Obama signed has a list of who the task force members are and you can look at the executive order on there's a Web site for the Gulf restoration but the first meeting of the Gulf Coast restoration

task force will be on Monday November 8 in Pensacola and it's open to the public so hopefully folks receive some invitations to join us at the Gulf Coast eco system restoration task force on Monday November 8.

And the Web site for the Gulf is restorethegulf.gov. So it's [www.restorethegulf](http://www.restorethegulf.gov), one word, dot gov. And so, I encourage folks to go look at the Web site. And if you're in the Gulf, and a community member, to join us on November 8. OK, so the fifth item on the agenda is to discuss quickly some of the topics from the community.

We before this call we had asked folks through the Web site if there was anything that they were interested in maybe hearing a little bit more about and one of the questions was how is EPA beginning to engage young people more often?

And so I'll just quickly run through EPA's use engagement work. Obviously the administrator's priority *expanding conversation on environmentalism and working for EJ* envisions that expanding the conversation has to be with our young people and the students in the United States. So an acknowledgement of that and trying to promote meaningful involvement and encourage public participation OEJ, the Office of Environmental Justice hosted a youth workshop focused on youth participation and environmental decision making process.

This was the first workshop and it was held during the July NEJAC meeting in Washington DC. The goal of the workshop was to create a youth base of active participants in the environmental decision making process while providing an opportunity for career development, environmental education, and obviously public participation, and also encouraging public participation during the NEJAC public comment period.

Based on the success of the original workshop OEJ will host another youth engagement workshop in Kansas City Missouri on November 16 once again coinciding with the NEJAC meeting. And in addition to these recent youth workshops OEJ launched a summer internship program in the summer of 2010 through the Washington Center and during its first year the program

supported a total of 10 college students, one in each EPA region to support the Environmental Justice work that we are doing.

And so we look forward to continuing that work and hopefully improving and advancing the effort to expand the conversation with our youth. Another item brought up by one of the stake holders was to discuss affordable and sustainable energy. In general the Department of Energy is the agency who leads this effort for the administration on renewable energy projects and they are a partner on the interagency working group.

And we have been talking about weatherization programs and other programs that they can begin to focus in EJ communities and focus some of their efforts more directed towards communities that maybe haven't been – haven't been at the table or haven't been a regular stake holder at the Department of Energy.

EPA occasionally provides minimal funding to local governments and communities for renewable energy projects through broader grant programs like the Climate Showcase Community Grants. And the Energy Star Program is also a joint Department of Energy EPA program and has numerous resources to help people save money and reduce their energy bills through energy efficiency products and practices.

We have some information on web sites that may be helpful. You can visit epa.gov/cleanenergy or you can also visit the Energy Star program www.energystar.gov. And once again hopefully there'll be more to come through our interagency work that was just reinvigorated this fall.

Another item brought up by some of the advocates is our air monitoring network. I think the concern was raised that during the Gulf Coast response there were some concerns that the community had. And we have tried very hard to listen to the concerns during the Gulf Coast response and moving forward.

That's why we offered to continue the EJ. The call that out – the state called it an outreach call that we began during the response with the – with some community organizations and other stake holders, and we hope to use that network and other venues to discuss EPA's air monitoring network.

One of the things that we would like to mention is that the best way to address some of these types of concerns is through EPA's Community Scale Air Tactics Monitoring grant program because these concerns are local in nature and vary from community to community.

The next opportunity to take advantage of this program will be in early 2011, so I encourage folks to look into that grant program. The request for proposals will be revised to put more emphasis on environmental justice concerns and community engagements. And our goal is really to identify some of the problems and exploring new monitoring technologies.

We certainly encourage community groups in the Gulf and other areas to work closely with their state and local agencies also to apply for these grants to get the resources for monitoring efforts in their communities.

We have about \$4.5 million available for this grant and we expect to award anywhere from 15 to 25 grants based on past history of the grant amounts. So we hope to get some solid proposals that can hopefully assist overburdened communities working through some of the issues on air monitoring.

And I think those are some of the items, once again Plan EJ 2014 and the interagency EJ work was raised. Hopefully I've answered some of those questions, but I think I'll go ahead and just open it to questions and answers. I don't know, how do we get the operator?

Operator: I'm here.

Lisa Garcia: Hi.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen if you would like to ask a question at this time, please press star then the number one on your telephone keypad. We'll pause for just a moment to compile the Q&A roster.

Lisa Garcia: Also there's a transcript. An Mp3 will be available on our EJ website.

Operator: Your first question is from the line of Darlene Mayes with Newtown Redevelopment Office.

Darlene Mayes: Hello.

Lisa Garcia: Hello.

Darlene Mayes: I was calling about – one of my questions is have you guys made a decision on the scholarship award?

Lisa Garcia: On the scholarship awards?

Darlene Mayes: Yes, for the scholarship for ...

Lisa Garcia: For – what?

Darlene Mayes: For the conference in Jacksonville.

Lisa Garcia: Oh, I do not have the answer to that but Darlene Mayes if you could – well we'll try to get the answer for that. And if you could e-mail your information in to the web site just so we have it, I don't want you to have to repeat it online in public. But we'll try to get you the answer for that. So this is the conference in Jacksonville?

Darlene Mayes: Correct.

Lisa Garcia: OK.

Darlene Mayes: Thank you.

Operator: Your next question is from the line of Stacy Guidry with Central Texas Waste.

Stacy Guidry: Hi, Stacy Guidry here, Central Texas Zero Waste Alliance as well as Texas Campaign for the Environment.

In regards to electronic waste dumping overseas, do you have a sense that the President and EPA will support legislation that includes the ban amendment in the Basel Convention?

Lisa Garcia: I do not have the answer for that either.

Stacy Guidry: OK.

Lisa Garcia: So sorry. But I know that there has been a lot of work and obviously the Office of International Tribal Affairs has been closely monitoring that. And so I don't think we've come out with a statement on support for legislation, but obviously we recognize some of the concerns and certainly the environmental impacts. And so we've been working on that, but I do not have a yea or nay on the support for legislation.

Stacy Guidry: OK, the legislation has been introduced out of Texas by Representative Gene Green from Houston.

Lisa Garcia: Yes.

Stacy Guidry: And we're a party to that and I was wanting to make sure that the EPA and President are pushing the most comprehensive – there was talk that legislation – or that e waste dumping would be considered without the ban amendment attached.

Lisa Garcia: OK.

Stacy Guidry: It's not comprehensive.

Lisa Garcia: Well we can definitely take this back to our international and OSWER you know our Office of Solid Waste Management ...

Stacy Guidry: Yes.

Lisa Garcia: And Emergency Response, and make sure that they know of this going forward.

Stacy Guidry: OK, great.

Lisa Garcia: Thank you.

Stacy Guidry: Thank you, hope you feel better.

Operator: Your next question is from the line of (Harry Williams) with California.

(Williams Harry): Oh yes, I'm (Williams Harry) and we live in Oxheart. They're trying to restore a large wetland, Almond Beach (inaudible) ...

Lisa Garcia: I'm sorry. Can you speak up a little bit please?

(Williams Harry): I'm (Williams Harry), I live in Oxheart, and our community has been deluged with toxic waste sites. We have a Superfund site here. We're trying to restore Almond Beach wetlands. Which is – the Superfund site is sitting right in the middle of it. And it just seems that it has been contaminated the ground water. And concerned about we are in earthquake country and possibility that somehow that ground water is going to end up getting into our aquifer. Is there any way to speed up the EPA's process on cleaning this up?

Lisa Garcia: Yes, so I would definitely encourage you to call Jane Diamond over at Region 9 who works on Superfund. And they have a pretty good program and have and you know work well with communities. So I would encourage you to reach out to Region 9 and the woman's name is Jane Diamond.

(Williams Harry): Diamond?

Lisa Garcia: Yes.

(Williams Harry): OK. Thank you very much.

Lisa Garcia: Yes. Thank you very much.

Operator: Your next question is from the line of Josh Habib with the Cadmus Group.

Josh Habib: Hi. I know the executive order for EJ doesn't apply to – doesn't directly apply to State; it applies to Federal agencies.

So how does you know the Office of Environmental Justice or the Administrator plan to work more aggressively with states for them to incorporate EJ issues into their permitting of facilities analysis of EJ issues and to permitting issues?

Lisa Garcia: Well, thank you for the question. Under Plan EJ 2014, the first intent or the first workload that we're taking on is to work on Federal permits, but

obviously to work with the states. We have had a few phone calls and some meetings with some of the state commissioners to really begin to talk about how we can collectively work on implementing the executive order, certainly through permitting, but through other means.

And right now, it doesn't you know the work that EPA is doing will not change any of the regulations or any of the requirements for the states. And so, like I said before, Plan EJ 2014 is right now focusing more on a Federal permit and going through the challenge of figuring out how we can really advance environmental justice through permitting.

And the hope is that we would, as part of our stakeholder outreach and working on this issue, that we continue to work with the states on some of the best practices.

Josh Habib: OK, thank you.

Lisa Garcia: Thank you.

Operator: Your next question is from the line of Adam Cutler with (Hillcox).

Adam Cutler: It's actually Adam Cutler at Talcott, the Public Interest Law Center of Philadelphia. I have a – I guess a clarification and then also a question. My clarification was the name of the air toxics monitoring grant program that you mentioned earlier?

Lisa Garcia: Yes, it's the Community Scale Air Toxics Monitoring Grant.

Adam Cutler: OK. OK. Thanks.

Lisa Garcia: And that is going out in 2011.

Adam Cutler: OK.

Lisa Garcia: And I don't – they didn't give me a specific web site, but I – excuse me – I assume if you go on to the Office of Air and Radiation that it'll hopefully get you to more information.

Adam Cutler: OK. So then my question was it's – obviously it's early and maybe too early, but is there any concern or sense of what Tuesday's election results might mean for the agencies and the administration's goals and commitments for EJ over the next two years and beyond?

Lisa Garcia: No our – the commitment for environment justice stands firm and we're not you know there's been no message or any – I don't think there's going to be any changes. It's clear that this administrator wants to continue working towards environment justice and we – we're not stopping any of our momentum or the work that we're doing.

And the Interagency Work Group is hosting the White House Forum on environment justice on December 15th so I think it sends a clear message that we're going to continue with our priorities.

Adam Cutler: That's good to hear, thank you.

Male: Thank you.

Operator: Your next question is from the line of (Juan Torres) with the Texas Environmental.

(Juan Torres): Good afternoon Ms. Garcia. First of all – I'm sorry. First of all I want to thank you for getting Charles Lee on your staff. I think he's capable and he'll do a good job for you.

Lisa Garcia: Thank you.

(Juan Torres): My question though is I'm in Houston and as you know our state is very business oriented and very oil and gas oriented and currently they have filed a lawsuit against EPA because of the flexible air permits. And now they're listed as the only state in the nation that is basically refusing or has not even started to address the green house gases.

And so when it comes to environment justices issues in our community we really need for Ms. Lisa Jackson to come down here, the administrator so that we can take her on toxic tours of very vulnerable communities. I understand

that you know she has been to ninth ward after Katrina and reading all those events.

We have very similar situations that Louisiana has and it's tragic that our state elected officials and even our Congressman (inaudible) Gene Green is pushing for good legislation, but believe it or not in our district, congressional district 29 we have the highest rates of uninsured families in the nation. And yet congressional district 29 is home to the (Houston Ship) channel.

But we have growth and development and the economy is really (bustling). So there's a line of contradictions in Houston and I would surely like to first of all get more air monitors but we could personally get Ms. Lisa Jackson to come down here and you know step on the foots of Governor Perry and do whatever it takes to get us moving to get clean air. We need it.

Lisa Garcia: Yes well we appreciate that invitation and we'll be working with region six, I know I certainly want to make a visit down to Texas and to visit some of the communities and I will – I'm sorry and I will definitely rely the invitation to the administrator, so thank you very much.

And I know that administrator doesn't – does certainly value the toxic tours that she has had with the communities so thank you very much for that.

Operator: Your next question is from the line of Barbara Miller with the Silver Valley Community Center.

(Bob Colona): Yes my name's doctor (Bob Colona), I 'm here with Barbara Miller. I'm on the board of directors of the Silver Valley Community Resource Center. We're in the epicenter of one of the largest superfund sites in the nation, the Bunker Hill Coeur d'Alene Basin and Superfund site that's been going on since 1983.

I have a couple quick questions. Sometimes we call ourselves the DP of the (inaudible) Northwest and get ignored here a lot by national as well. And we've been working on getting Lisa Jackson here or on a conference call for several months now. And we want to encourage any – encourage the staff and

Garcia to continue – we're working with the scheduler now and with (Diane Thompson) Chief of Staff.

She's suppose to get a date for us to have a conference call we want to let her know what's going on here as far as inequities and environmental justice.

Lisa Garcia: OK.

(Bob Colona): Quick question is the White House Forum you mentioned was by invitation. I was wondering what qualifies a person to get an invitation?

Lisa Garcia: We have – we're working on an invitation list and it's called the White House Environmental Justice Leadership Forum. And so the focus is to bring some of the leaders in and as we figure out space to then open it up and to continue to invite people. So hopefully we'll be able to get as many people in there are the focuses for community members you know community members from environmental justice, low income, minority or tribal communities.

(Bob Colona): I'd just like to mention that and recommend just for future reference that Barbara Miller be noted to get an invitation. She's been an environmental justice activist in Northern Idaho, Erin Brockovich of Northern Idaho we usually call her. And she's been fighting the inequities here and the injustices here for over 25 years.

Lisa Garcia: OK great, we'll definitely bring the message back to the White House, we appreciate that. And it looks like you have all the right ears on the Bunker Hill Superfund Site. I know that Mathy Stanislaus for (inaudible)...

(Bob Colona): (Inaudible) I've had bad experiences with Mathy.

Lisa Garcia: Well he's certainly the representative from EPA on that so we'll continue to you know to have an open dialog with you and the community on that.

(Bob Colona): Garcia one quick question before you leave. Does EPA have anything in place or procedures to have conflict resolution mediation hearings when you have a conflict with a regional office? That's been – we've been trying to get something like that for years and nobody knows whether it exists or not.

Lisa Garcia: Yes we have alternative dispute resolution and that is run out of I believe it's our Office of General Counsel. So if you were to contact region 10 the Office of General Counsel, they may be able to direct you to that alternative dispute resolution.

(Bob Colona): Thank you very much Ms. Garcia.

Lisa Garcia: Thank you.

Operator: Your next question is from Dr. Henry Clark with West County Toxics Coalition.

Henry Clark: Hello I'm out of Bridgeman, California region nine, good to be on the call here. My question is this, is that referred to Executive Order 12898 environmental justice which according to my understanding it relates to the disproportionate impact on low income communities of color.

So within that particular context this Plan 2014 was the first time I heard of it and my colleagues here in the San Francisco area which have been leaders in the environment justice movement I never heard them refer to anything about this plan, so I don't know how we missed that.

But in terms of the Executive Order, how does this plan and any other efforts that you referred to address the ongoing disproportionate impact that the Executive Order was suppose to address and stop which still continues to go on?

Lisa Garcia: The – so Plan EJ 2014 we – I'm sorry that you haven't heard of it. We were working with the regions to have some local calls and to make sure that at the different either round tables or listening sessions that they're holding that they talk about it and we did mention it on the last call.

So I'm glad that you called in this time and were able to hear about it. But I encourage you to either go to the Web site or I'm sure maybe you can access it from a library through the Internet or other places to download it and if you do have any comments or folks from your community to certainly feel free to send us any comments on it.

And the goal of Plan EJ 2014 is as we move forward to the 20th anniversary ensuring that EPA is advancing and incorporating the Executive Order on environmental justice so it really – the topics hope to get to some of those disproportionate impacts. But also tackle some of the moves forward I guess I would say is how do we bring benefits to some of those communities.

So it looks at community based efforts, some of our grants and funding to ensure that we're still working on capacity building and helping to really improve the quality of life and reduce some of the risks in communities. So I would encourage you to look at it and to send it comments.

Henry Clark: I will be following up on this with my colleagues here.

Lisa Garcia: OK thank you for calling.

Henry Clark: You're welcome.

Operator: Your next question is from the line of David Ruble with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

David Ruble: Hi yes this is David from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and our question is if more with the federal permits the focus on getting EJ incorporated and federal permits is what specific metrics is EPA considering for permit guidelines?

Lisa Garcia: Well we haven't made a decision on any metrics nor on creating any guidelines so once again this is very much at its premature stages and there's been no decisions on whether we would be coming out with guidance or what those metrics would look like. It's just that the community has really asked us to tackle the issue of permitting and environmental justice and we've kind of agreed to take on that challenge.

But like I said the scope of work in the beginning of this is in the very beginning stages I guess until at the NEJAC next week or on the 15th we're going to be receiving some of the recommendations from the community and

from NEJAC on giving us some guidance on how they think we should proceed.

David Ruble: OK how from the state level can we try to support this?

Lisa Garcia: Well we did have meeting with the ECOS to let them know that we're going to be working on this and I know that some of the regions have their state commissioner's meetings so we would definitely ask for the support and since this is still out for public comment we were hoping that some of the states would submit comments in support of that.

And certainly we are looking for lessons learned and best practices and that's the hope as we go around to some of the states and talking to them what they can bring to the conversation. So there is no outreach plan per say but we are definitely encouraging it.

(Kyle Lemon): This is (Kyle Lemon) also from CEQ I just want to state that from the states perspective it's very difficult to try and advance these kinds of goals more or less without some sort of clear and defense able guidance set to what constitutes an over burdened community. And that's something that in order for the states to move forward we're going to have to have some sort of guidance on that it's very easy to look at some communities and say that is obviously, an over burdened community. But we need something clear that we can fall back on and defend.

Lisa Garcia: OK well I appreciate that comment and I mean I think generally speaking you know we hope that the states are really trying to bring some of the benefits that we're talking about to over burdened communities looking at communities that maybe have cumulative impacts from several facilities or just maybe health disparities. And so we will definitely try to tackle some of those issues within EPA but certainly encourage the states to move forward and start to tackle some of these issues also.

(Kyle Lemon): OK thank you.

Lisa Garcia: Thank you.

Operator: Your next question is from the line (Dawn Nelson) with the University of Michigan.

(Dawn Nelson): Hi, I'm (Dawn Nelson) from the University of Michigan, I'm a master's student in the environmental justice program. And here at the university there's a lot of students and faculty working on EJ issues as well as climate change adaptation and climate change generally. And in between those two fields there's specific interest in climate adjustments and I'm wondering if you could speak of it to the inter relationship of the EJ working group and the climate change adaptation working group and where you see there are places of overlap where common goals can be identified.

Lisa Garcia: So I guess I just need a little bit of clarification. The EJ working group and the climate change-working group that are you talking about an EPA ...

(Dawn Nelson): Yes, the Council on Environmental Quality.

Lisa Garcia: Oh, OK I see for out of the White House yes, so CEQ just issued their climate change adaptation report yes. And so we've – so EPA has definitely been a part of that and working on that. And one of the things that we've heard from certainly some of the environmental justice or climate justice stakeholders is that the administration continue to focus its effort on climate justice and really incorporate that in climate change adaptation.

So we hope at the Interagency Working Group on environmental justice that we can have a dialogue on climate justice and some of the climate work that we're doing to ensure that we're capturing some of the principals. I know there's been some reports out as we move forward on that agenda.

(Dawn Nelson): Are there people – are those scheduled are those meeting scheduled is there active engagement to move forward on that?

Lisa Garcia: It's not a separate group but the White House forum one of the topics that we're talking about getting on the agenda is the climate change since you know a lot of the advocates have asked for it. And we do plan to have some stakeholder outreach calls on the climate change adaptation report that just

went out. Those are being planned also so it's not separate the hope is that everyone is working kind of towards the same goal.

(Dawn Nelson): Right, right and the outreach that's about to occur will there be in characterizing that outreach effort will there be – will there be EJ addressed in that outreach operate will it be identified as part of the climate change adaptation discussion is also to address EJ issues?

Lisa Garcia: Yes, I don't know if CEQ is planning to call it out as something separate you know once again, we're trying to incorporate it into everything we're doing so. And I think those outreach calls are coming up towards the end of the month so. I would just encourage you to get in touch with CEQ or to make sure that you're on those outreach calls.

(Dawn Nelson): Great thank you.

Lisa Garcia: Thank you.

Operator: Your next question is from the line (Leslie Fields) with Fair Club.

(Leslie Fields): Hi, this is (Leslie Fields) with the Fair Club hi, Lisa thank you for doing this. I wondered if you had any update on the disposition of the back laws of the Title VI complaints.

Lisa Garcia: Well I can give you two quick updates. One is under the Interagency Working Group activities one is the agreement among the agencies is that DOJ and EPA form a working group to assess and work on recommendations for the agencies Title VI claims. But also figuring out what to do some of the oldest cases. And I know that EPA internally has been looking at the oldest cases and hoping to I guess to get through them within the next few months. I guess that's about as far as I can go but they're at the top of the list over here at EPA.

(Leslie Fields): So when you say the oldest ones you're saying the ones I mean ...

Lisa Garcia: We have some backlogs going dated back to – oh, well OK.

(Leslie Fields): Fifteen years.

Lisa Garcia: Yes, to 1995 and trying to figure out how we you know how we address those and so we're working hard to get those investigated and to figure out where to go with those. So the work has been happening.

(Leslie Fields): OK but you don't have a particular timeframe on these old ones yet.

Lisa Garcia: I can't give you a final date on when some of those decisions would come out but we're hoping sooner than later is what I can say.

(Leslie Fields): OK thanks.

Lisa Garcia: Thanks.

Operator: Your next question is from the line of (Robert McCarroll) with Boise State University.

(Robert McCarroll): Hi, Lisa thank you for taking this call. I've been doing fieldwork up in North Idaho for the past 4-1/2 months and my background is that of an ethnographer and oral historian. And I wrote the administrator about these concerns when I saw the request for comments on 2014.

And my question to you is as you're considering the revisions of you know the methodology of environmental justice I'm wondering you know is or has the perspectives of the humanities the social sciences you know sociology anthropology – I'm not so interested in the disciplines as I am in the methods. Will those play any kind of a role in redefining this relationship of environmental justice to the work that EPA does?

Lisa Garcia: I think – well your question on methodology may be a little bit beyond my understanding. But certainly, the understanding that we've heard from communities is that for instance you can't look at a community you know in a silo that you know EPA can't just come at it from the viewpoint of water quality that communities exist as whole.

And so the effort to bring in the other agencies and combine our efforts and collaborate hopefully brings in some of the social and economic I guess concerns and issues that many communities have as well as the

environmental. And so there is that recognition that we need to move forward collectively and address some of the I guess as you're saying many of the social aspects, as you know an administration. But as far as the methodology goes, there's no envisioning of changing any methodology. And I ...

(Robert McCarroll): And the reason I ask is that in North Idaho at the Bunker Hill site you heard earlier from (Bob) and (Barb) but I've worked with them but most of the information that EPA presents when they do actually come into the Valley, which is not all that often from region 10 is statistical quantified empirical scientific information.

And certainly you know that's part of the charge at EPA I understand that but from a community perspective you know people are intimidated by you know an approach that to a certain extent is written in a language that excludes them. And it just seems to me that it's really important particularly now that you know if EPA is going to seriously consider E Day as part of all of these other tasks that they do that they also find a way to translate you know their information to the communities in a way that communities can actually use it.

And then flip that around and find a way to get information from the grass roots not simply the same stake holding groups that you know might represent an environmental or a political constituency.

Lisa Garcia: Well you know I appreciate that comment and we certainly have it as one of our missions to improve outreach and community engagement and certainly, like I mentioned before one of the priorities is to expand the conversation. And maybe get to some of the communities that we haven't been to or as you say you know the usual suspects or stakeholders and so I appreciate that comment.

As we try to improve, our communications and really working toward plain English or plain language so that communities can understand what they're faced with or what is superfund site means and the science of that. So I – and I definitely I'm glad that you submitted comments on Plan EJ 2014 so we can work on review those a little bit more closely so thank you.

(Robert McCarroll): Thank you.

Operator: Your next question is from the line of Glenn Pratt with the NAACP.

Glenn Pratt: Greetings. I'm glad that even though I lived in Idaho, glad we're getting back to the Midwest. But my concern and I had many years at EPA region five working to start the Environmental Justice program there.

But the problem we have, the state of Indiana, even more so under the last election has said "go to hell." Is it they have eliminated their Environmental Justice program? They have said they have no intent to do anything. They have no intent to implement the new clean air standards and we even had a combination in NAACP and the Chamber of Commerce that tried to get the governor to change.

But we can get EPA region five to do nothing to implement a program to address Environmental Justice issues. EPRI then has said oh, we treat everybody equally. We don't look at any of these other things. How do we get region five to respond?

Lisa Garcia: Well I don't – I have to say I'm not familiar with this specific I guess situation between Indiana and why they're not implementing some of these. But I think the overall and implementing Plan EJ 2014 and the administrative priority, it's going to be really working with our regions to make sure that they're getting some of the work done and maybe focusing on some of the communities.

So I guess if the state of Indiana isn't being cooperative than what are some of the things that EPA can do to go into some of the communities in Indiana and maybe work with the state on issues that see. Maybe it wouldn't be called Environmental Justice but community work.

Glenn Pratt: No, no, what we're saying ...

Lisa Garcia: We have like play spaced efforts and so I think that I will definitely be in touch with the regional administrator to get a little bit more on this. But I would also encourage you to call region five. They're now our lead region for Environmental Justice and see if there's ways that you can think of to work

this out and make sure that we're still doing environmental justice work in Indiana because we're certainly not going to ignore any one state.

Glenn Pratt: We have in fact joined with environmental groups to have the program withdrawn from the state because of their lack of addressing environmental issues not just environmental justice. And so since the region doesn't seem to respond we would request your involvement.

Lisa Garcia: OK, well I mean you know it's kind of – it's one EPA as we like to say so I'll try to find out more information and if you could write into the Web site or submit some comments with a few more specifics I'd be willing to look at that and work through some of the issues.

Glenn Pratt: Will do, thank you very much.

Lisa Garcia: Thank you very much.

Operator: Your next question is from the line of (Gloria Leonard) with Cancer Survivors Against Radon.

(Gloria Leonard): Hi. My name is (Gloria Leonard) and my organization is Cancer Survivors Against Radon and it's nationwide. But I'm also part of Southern Illinois Radon Awareness Task Force. And I was wondering and hoping that Radon gas was on your scope preventing radon induced lung cancer. Radon gas is the leading environmental cause of cancer mortality in our nation.

And it represents up to 14 to 18 percent of the cancer deaths, the lung cancer deaths. And as you probably know up to 22,000 people or more lose their life in our nation throughout the year from radon induced lung cancer. And what I was wondering I did meet with assistant director Gina McCarthy about three or four weeks ago and there is going to be an inter - a cross-government agency meeting on November the 30th concerning radon gas and what can be done and that's going to include various federal agencies.

And what I was wondering first is what if you were aware of it or going to be involved with that. And second is what we can – are there grants that we could apply for either of my organizations to change this because the people

that are in our high risk areas you know they don't – most of our nation doesn't know what radon gas is but certainly the ones that are in the high risk areas even if they knew about it they couldn't afford to fix it. And this is something really needs to be addressed and I was wondering if you have comments on that or answers.

Lisa Garcia: Yes, well I was going to say that it is a priority for our – for Gina McCarthy as you mentioned and I'm glad that you know about the meeting because that is part of the steps moving forward to help elevate it and to make sure that we're all working on it.

And so I am definitely a part of that meeting and will be attesting and making sure that we have I guess certainly the right voices at the table to begin this discussion and continue explaining how it's a priority and how we need to address it. As far as funding and grants available, I do not know of that and this may be part of some of the recommendations that come out of that meeting.

So it seems that you are in touch with the senior person on this and so I'd encourage you to keep in touch with her as we move forward to see what funding does become available to get to some of these concerns and really address the radon issue so I appreciate that.

(Gloria Leonard): And can you could me your name I didn't catch it (inaudible) ...

Lisa Garcia: Lisa Garcia.

(Gloria Leonard): OK I wasn't sure I thought that what it was. Well thank you very much thank you.

Lisa Garcia: OK so it's 5:00 p.m. and we're going to close the call so that you don't have to suffer through my voice anymore. Hopefully next call I will sound much sharper but I appreciate it sounds like these calls are useful and people are using them to get some information so I appreciate that.

We'll be setting up our next call for probably late January and of course we are available in the interim by e-mail or by phone calls. And I'm thinking that

maybe at the next meeting we'll have a guest speaker to focus more on maybe the solid waste the superfund issues or maybe the air issues and have some of the AAs come and talk about more specific items and topics that are coming up.

But please continue to give us comments and be a partner in all this as we move forward to really move the agenda on environmental justice forward. And so I look forward to the next call or seeing you at the many events coming up in the next few months. Thank you and have a good night.

Operator: Thank you all for participating in today's conference call you may now disconnect.

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